

Message Text

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SUBJ: GATT WP ON TRADE WITH ROMANIA

REF: (A) STATE 118713; (B) BUCHAREST 2296 NOTAL

BEGIN SUMMARY: ROMANIA INFORMED WP OF INTENTION INTRO-
DUCE PROVISIONAL CUSTOMS TARIFF NEXT JANUARY BUT UNCERTAIN
WHETHER AND IF SO WHEN ROMANIA WOULD WANT TO RENEGOTIATE
ITS PRESENT SCHEDULE. DISCUSSION OF QRS RESULTED IN
DISAGREEMENT IN WP ABOUT EC INTERPRETATION OF PARA 3
OF PROTOCOL OF ACCESSION. END SUMMARY

1. ROMANIAN DECISION ABOUT " PROVISIONAL" TARIFF ADDED A
LITTLE LIFE TO AN OTHERWISE DESULTORY REVIEW OF ROMANIAN- GATT
CP RELATIONS PER PROTOCOL OF ACCESSION. NEWS ABOUT ROMANIAN
TARIFF INTENTIONS BECAME KNOWN JUST PRIOR TO CLEARANCE OF
WP REPORT. EC TOOK LEAD IN PROBING FOR DETAILS WHICH
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ROMANIAN DELEGATION INCLUDING SEVERAL OFFICIALS FROM BUCHAREST UNABLE (PERHAPS UNWILLING) TO ANSWER. EC PRESSED FOR ASSURANCE NEW TARIFF WOULD BE NON-DISCRIMINATORY (PRIVATELY EC REP KAWAN TOLD US REP HE IS CERTAIN TARIFF WILL NOT BE APPLIED TO IMPORTS FROM USSR AND OTHER EASTERN TRADING PARTNERS AND THUS WILL DISCRIMINATE AGAINST CPS). ROMANIAN REP INITIALLY CONFIRMED PROPOSED TARIFF WOULD BE NON-DISCRIMINATORY, BUT SHIFTED TO EXPRESSION OF "HOPE" THAT WOULD BE THE CASE WHEN ATTEMPT MADE TO RECORD HIS STATEMENT. OTHER MEMBERS OF WP, LED BY CANADA, QUERIED WHETHER LEGISLATIVE DECISION BY ROMANIA DIDN'T TRIGGER PARA 2 OF ANNEX B OF PROTOCOL AND ASKED WHEN ROMANIA PLANNED TO RENEGOTIATE ITS PRESENT UNDERTAKING IN GATT SCHEDULE LXIX. ROMANIAN DELEGATION HAD NO INFO ABOUT SUCH INTENTIONS, NOTED LANGUAGE OF ANNEX B IS PERMISSIVE (ROMANIAN "MAY") AND PRESENT UNDERTAKING STAYS UNTIL CHANGED. US REP DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSION.

2. SECTION OF WP REPORT DEALING WITH TARIFF READS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE
REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S PLAN REGARDING THE POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF A CUSTOMS TARIFF, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ROMANIA CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS INDEED THE INTENTION OF HIS AUTHORITIES, AND INFORMED THE WORKING PARTY THAT IT HAD BEEN DECIDED BY HIS AUTHORITIES THAT ON 1 JANUARY 1974 A PROVISIONAL CUSTOMS TARIFF WOULD BE INTRODUCED. SEVERAL DELEGATIONS, IN VIEW OF THE NEW SITUATION CREATED BY THE INTRODUCTION IN 1974 OF A PROVISIONAL CUSTOMS TARIFF, REGARDING WHICH LITTLE INFORMATION WAS AS YET AVAILABLE, RESERVED THEIR POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THAT TARIFF, AND LOOKED FORWARD TO ITS PUBLICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE X. UNQUOTE

3. REVIEW OF ROMANIAN AND CP PERFORMANCE UNDER PROTOCOL OF ACCESSION WAS PERFUNCTORY DUE TO INACTIVE US ROLE (PER REFTEL A) AND ROMANIAN DESIRE NOT TO BE TOO HARD ON EC FOR VIOLATING TERMS OF PROTOCOL BY INTRODUCING NEW DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ROMANIA. DURING 1972 SOME EC MEMBER STATES REMOVED QRS ON SOME PRODUCTS FROM GATT COUNTRIES OTHER THAN ROMANIA AND POLAND; A COMPARISON OF LATEST EC QR NOTIFICATION WITH LIST WHEN ROMANIA ACCEDED TO GATT SHOWS NEW ITEMS SUBJECT TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QRS IN SOME UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER STATES. EC ASSERTS THIS IS NO VIOLATION OF PROTOCOL SO LONG AS THERE IS NET REDUCTION IN OVERALL LEVEL OF QRS. PETRESCU PRIVATELY EXPLAINED TO CULBERT BUCHAREST IS SO PLEASED ABOUT EC DECISION TO ACCORD ROMANIA BENEFICIARY STATUS UNDER EC GSP THAT IT IS WILLING TO TOLERATE MINOR BREACH OF QR UNDERTAKING. PETRESCU DID PUT ON RECORD FORMAL VIEW OF ROMANIA THAT

INCREASE IN DISCRIMINATION BY EC IS CONTRARY TO PARA 3 OF
PROTOCOL WHICH CANADA AND POLAND SUPPORTED. US REP, IN HIS
ONLY INTERVENTION OF ENTIRE MEETING, RESERVED US POSITION
ON INTERPRETATION OF PROTOCOL ADVANCED BY EC.

4. WP NOTED ROMANIA HAD MET ITS COMMITMENT UNDER ANNEX B
OF PROTOCOL. BASSIN

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